The ancient myth of Icarus tells of a young man who died flying too close to the sun while attempting to escape the Greek island of Crete in wings constructed of feathers and wax. It is considered to be a tragic tale, themed on failure at the hands of hubris, with Icarus often represented as a flaming figure falling into the Mediterranean Sea – a body of water now traversed by refugees and asylum seekers fleeing war, famine and persecution.

On April 27th 2016 Iranian asylum seeker, Omid Masoumali, set himself alight on the Pacific Island of Nauru in protest against ongoing detention. He died two days later in a Brisbane hospital; defying incarceration meted out as punishment to those daring to seek sanctuary.

This installation detains visitors' bodies at the threshold while withholding their view of a fiery figure wrapped in a Mylar emergency blanket who stands on the fossil cliffs of Tasmania's Maria Island looking into the rising sun.

From a Tasmanian island once ringed with long-extinguished Aboriginal fires, to Australia's 'Pacific Solution' that drives Masoumali and fellow detainee Hodan Yasin to self-immolation, to contemporary Greece where lifejackets and Mylar blankets line the shores, Icarus' fatal flight is referenced to highlight the staggering cost that thousands of refugees continue to pay for wishing to live their lives in safety and security.

Island Icarus (for Omid Masoumali), **2017**
Steel Security Fencing, Projection Material, Sound and Video
Installation in three rooms
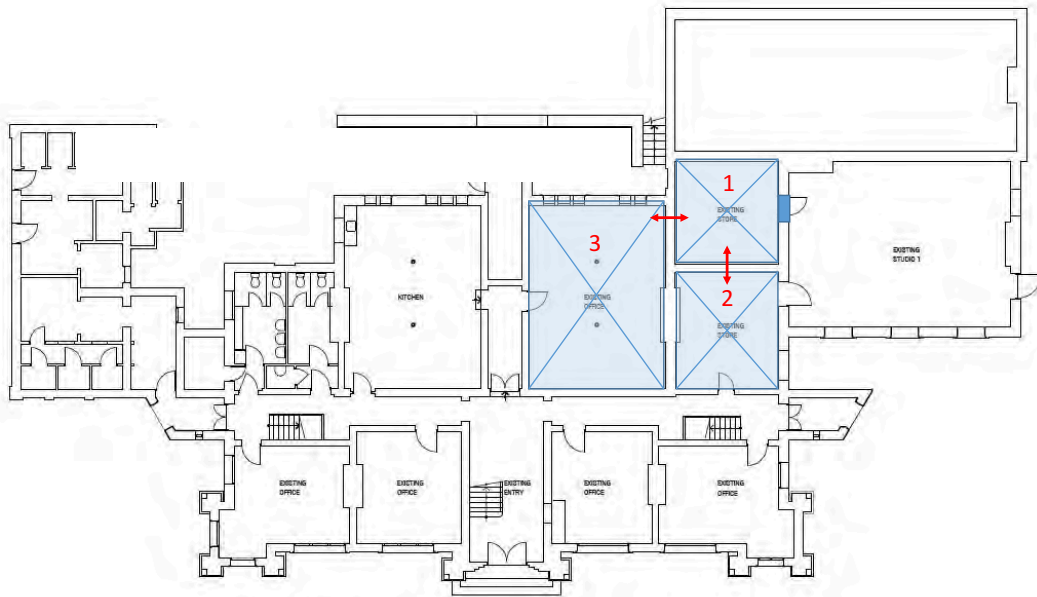
DORITA HANNAH | SEAN COYLE

Images from videography of *Landscape Scenographers* performing on Tasmania's Maria Island during Performance+Design's Intervening in the AnthropoScene, July 2016. Photo: Sean Coyle

ISLAND ICARUS

REMANENCE exhibition: Ten Days on the Island Festival: Domain House, Hobart, March 2017

ISLAND ICARUS: REAR PROJECTION
FLOOR PLAN (9/03/2017):
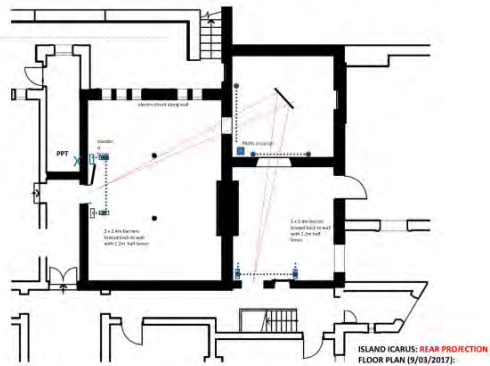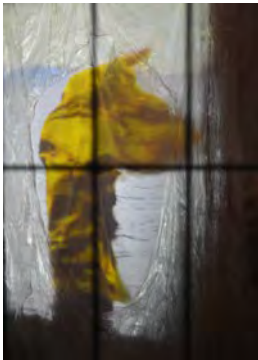
PHONEHOME

CHILE ARCHITECTURE & URBANISM BIENNIAL: 'UNPOSTPONABLE' 26/10-10/11/2017 — DORITA HANNAH with SHAUNNA JANSSEN & JO KINNIBURGH
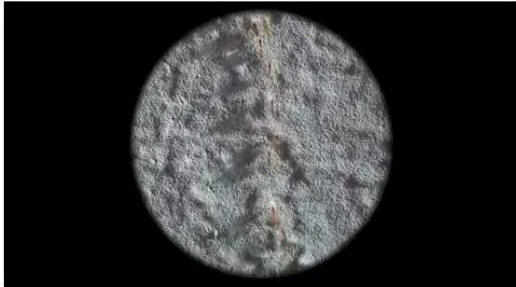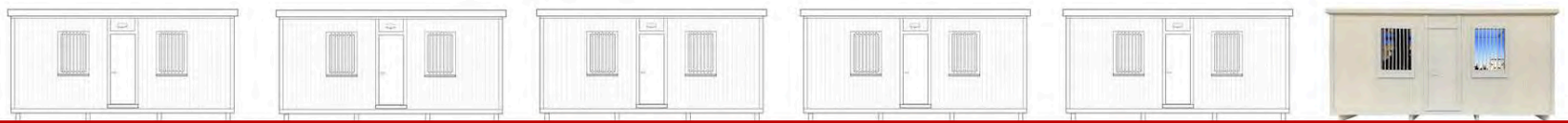
REVOLTING: Lindsay Seers (UK)

TeaTime EUROPE: Giorgos Zamboulakis (Greece)

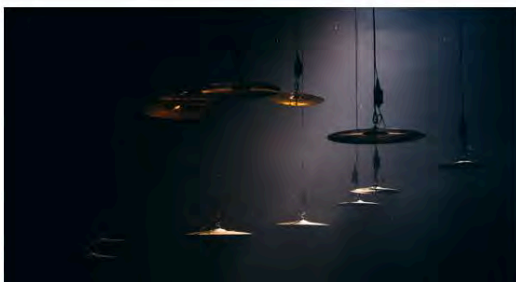*DRONE FOOTAGE OF HOMS*: RT (Russia)

NOTHING TO DECLARE: Dictaphone Group (Lebanon)

CHAUKA: Please Tell Us the Time: Bouchani/Sarvestani (Kurdistan/Iran)

ISLAND ICARUS: Hannah, Coyle & Jackson (NZ/Australia)

and then the rain: David Shearing (UK)

VIGIL: Tracey Moffatt (Australia/USA)

AYAZ'S LAMENT: Rescue4Children (Kurdistan/Iran)

For many in exile, the smartphone stands in for home, kept safe with identity documents in a watertight plastic bag. As an innate body extension it situates, orients, documents, represents, transcends and resists a life lived in exile. *PhoneHome* explores this contemporary condition of being alien and architecture's complicity in detaining bodies. Videos, playing on mobile phone screens housed in miniature refugee cabins, engage with the pervasive geo-cultural, geo-mythical and geo-political issues of our time and architecture's role in housing those without home and homeland.

PHONEHOME :: ARCHITECTURE A/PART

Despite its intrinsic mobility, the smartphone has become a tethering device to friends, family and community that call upon each other across vast distances. For many it stands in for home, kept safe with identity documents in a watertight plastic bag. No longer locating caller or receiver in a specific place (such as home), phones are now linked to individuals who transmit globally; opening up space for maintaining virtual networks of connection. As innate body extensions they are also a means for situating, documenting, transcending and resisting a life lived in exile.

In the 1982 movie E.T., the stranded Extra-Terrestrial needs to "phone home" and constructs a communication mechanism from electronic components found around its hosts' house. Exemplifying a stranger in a strange land - exiled from its own home - the detained alien (hailing from beyond the known world) is yearning to make connection and return to a familiar realm. 35 years later we inhabit an age where countless humans are forced to leave their homelands and seek asylum elsewhere: finding themselves defined as 'aliens' and confined in unhomely refugee camps and detention centres. Such environments with their cookie-cutter shelters epitomise alienating and spatially reductive experiences: barely containers for a bare-life.

This installation incorporates videos, created by artists, architects, designers and correspondents, whose work resonates with the notion of 'phone home' as a critical spatial apparatus, providing the means for integrating issues of mediation, alienation and detention. The videos play on phones, embedded within a row of replica models of refugee cabins, apprehended through mediating elements of barred windows, mirrors and headphones.

Jon McKenzie has proposed that "a resistant performativity cannot do without a global feeling of political love" (133). Referring to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's demand for "a more generous and more unrestrained conception of love" (351), operating beyond romantic and familial ties, McKenzie suggests being 'a/part' – "feeling a part of the world and feeling apart from it at the same time" (129). This (dis)passionate approach requires operating somewhere between immersion and critical distance, which the *PhoneHome* installation calls upon viewers to do: while listening to headphones they must adjust their focal length to observe the screened videos, through an-other screening of the windows' intervening bars.

The screen – a fixed or movable plane that simultaneously divides and connects, reveals and conceals, upon which images and data are displayed and filtered – provides a powerful agent for critical performativity: especially in our highly-mediated world streaming information 24/7 via smart phones, tablets, monitors, slideshow presentations and architectural facades; but also where bodies themselves (both visceral and virtual) are screened to vet who's in and who's out.

The videos selected for *PhoneHome* critique and engage with the pervasive geo-cultural, geo-mythical and geo-political issues of our time. However, by playing them on the mobile phone screens, which are incorporated within the cabins and surrounded by mirrors, they are further mediated and rendered site-specific: understood through the diminutive architecture in which they are housed. By withholding a clear view of the videos, the mobile becomes more apparent as a spatial, social and politicized element: streaming what Fred Moten and Stefano Harney call 'fantasy in the hold'.

The row of cabins is reflected and multiplied within a mirror-backed wall niche into which they are placed. Their position demands that visitors bend low or kneel to peer within and decipher the videos; thereby appearing to passers-by as votaries expressing deference to these miniature homes for mobile phones. Viewers are invited to engage bodily in order to critically reflect on our own complicity in the spatial histories and architectural realities belonging to some of the most precarious political subjects of our time; the refugee, detainee, asylum seeker and perceived 'alien'.
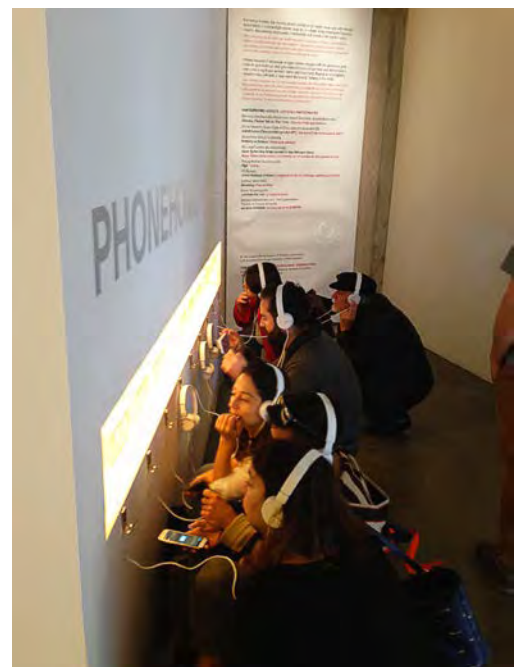

E.T the Extra-Terrestrial, directed by Stephen Spielberg (Universal Pictures, 1982)
Jon McKenzie: 'Global Feeling: (Almost) All You Need is Love' in *Performance Design*, eds., D. Hannah & O. Olav *Harsløf* (Museum Tusculanum Press, 2008).
Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri: *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (NY: Penguin Press, 2004).

PHONEHOME :: AN INSTALLATION ABOUT MEDIATIZATION, MINATURIZATION AND ALIENATION

CHILE ARCHITECTURE & URBANISM BIENNIAL :: 'UNPOSTPONABLE':: VALAPARAISO OCTOBER 26 – NOVEMBER 10 2017
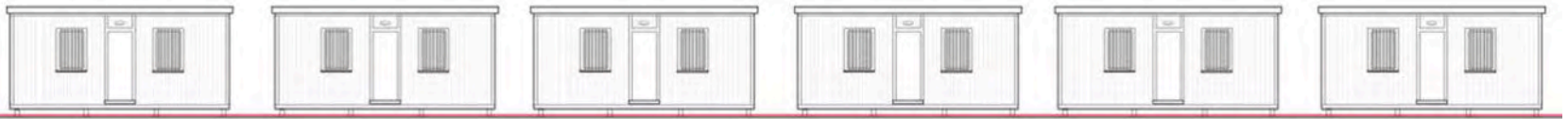
Directly referencing architecture's failure to critically engage, both in discourse and practice, the *PhoneHome* cabins are based on standardised shelters found in organised military rows in Jordan's Zaatari refugee camp and other sites such as detention centres set up by the Australian Government for those who dared to be trafficked by boat to the "lucky country" and were instead sent to Pacific islands as punishment for such audacity. The cabin's banality and attention to the minimal requirements of accommodation scarcely improve on similarly proliferating tents and makeshift shelters, incapable of protecting against the indifference of weather and vermin.
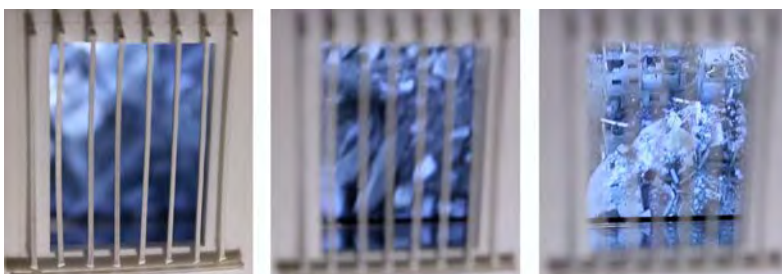
The viewer's gaze at video images playing on a smartphone phone screen is mediated by barred windows and reflected through internal mirrors.

PHONE HOME

LLAMA A CASA

PHONEHOME is a **SPECIAL GUESTS Project**: an interdisciplinary and collaborative test site that combines theory and action to utilise the event as a means of critiquing and reimagining our fast-changing contemporary world.

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS:
Behrouz Boochani (Kurdistan/Iran) & Arash Sarvestani (Iran/Netherlands): ***Chauka, Please Tell Us The Time***
Dictaphone Group (Lebanon): ***Nothing to Declare***
Rescue4Children (Kurdistan/Iraq): ***Ayaz: Syrian Boy Sings Lament in Iraq Refugee Camp***
Dorita Hannah, Sean Coyle & Chris Jackson (NZ/Australia): ***Island Icarus ("you peeled our skin off")***
Tracey Moffatt (Australia/USA): ***Vigil***
RT (Russia): ***Drone Footage of Homs***
Lindsay Seers (UK): ***Revolting***
David Shearing (UK): ***and then the rain***
Giorgos Zamboulakis and The Experimental Theatre of Thrace (Greece): ***tea time EUROPE***

CURATORS/DESIGNERS:
Dorita Hannah (Australia/New Zealand), Shauna Janssen (Canada), Joanne Kinniburgh (Australia/NZ)

MODEL DEVELOPMENT: Joanne Kinniburgh
CATALOGUE EDITORS: Dorita Hannah and Shauna Janssen
GRAPHIC DESIGNER: Finley Smith (Australia)
POST-PRODUCTION ENGINEER: Caleb Miller (Australia)

CATALOGUE TEXTS:
Dorita Hannah: **PhoneHome: architecture a/part**
Jordan Geiger: **Witnesses**
Shauna Janssen: **'Fantasy in the Hold': Architecture, Critical Mobilities, Political Love**
Jon McKenzie: **Discargo: Überoverundunder**
Tony Fry: **From 'a me' to 'a you"**

PhoneHome is an installation selected by jury for exhibition at Unpostponable: the XX Chile Architecture & Urbanism Biennial: Valparaiso, October 26 – November 10, 2017.
It is comprised of nine videos selected by the curatorial team in consultation with international referees,
Sodja Lotker (Serbia / Czech Republic), Jordan Geiger (USA) and Tony Fry (UK / Australia)

Island Icarus ("you peeled our skin off") — Dorita Hannah (architect) Sean Coyle (scenographer) Chris Jackson (performance designer)
Isla Ícaro ("nos arrancaste la piel")

The myth of Icarus is often represented through a flaming figure falling into the Mediterranean Sea, which is now traversed by refugees and asylum seekers fleeing war, famine and persecution. Carried to us on distant winds, their stories are muted by media and a vast expanse between "us" and "them".

In 2016 Iranian asylum seeker, Omid Masoumali, fatally set fire to himself in protest against ongoing detention by the Australian Government on the island of Nauru. Captured on mobile phones, his tragic self-immolation shows him screaming, "you peeled our skin off"; a Farsi phrase referring to intense psychological torture. These cries are incorporated into our video of a fiery figure, wrapped in a wind-whipped emergency blanket, who stands looking into the rising sun on the fossil cliffs of Tasmania's Maria Island.

From an island once ringed with Aboriginal fires, to Australia's 'Pacific Solution', to contemporary Greece where lifejackets and emergency blankets line its shores like discarded skins, Icarus' fatal flight highlights the staggering cost thousands of refugees continue to pay for wishing to live in safety and security.

bordean sus costas como pieles descartadas, el vuelo fatal de Ícaro resalta el costo desmedido que miles de refugiados seguirán pagando por desear vivir en condiciones de seguridad.

Videography by Sean Coyle during AnthropoScenic interventions on Maria Island (July 2016) created with Landscape Scenographers: Katrina Simons, Maiju Loukola, Alice Lewis, Dorita Hannah and Emma Sheppard-Simms.
Thanks to Mehrangiz Modarres Tabatabaei.
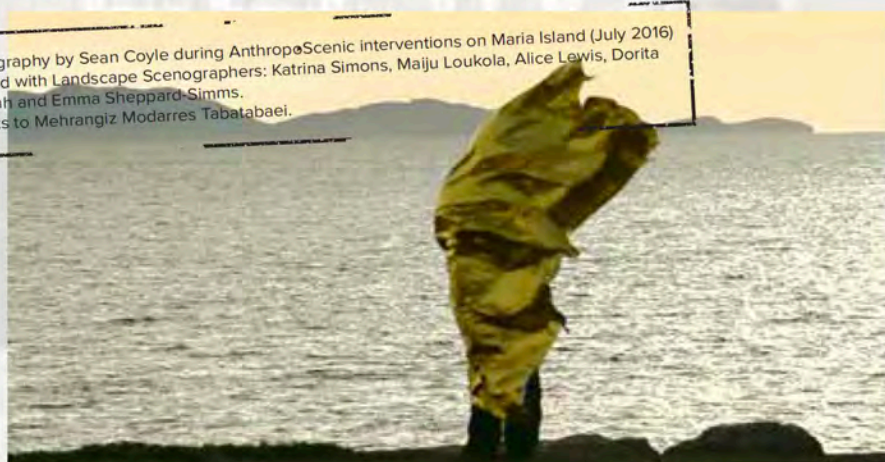
Fragments

FRAGMENTS

After the performance is over there are only fragments.... Models, drawings, costumes, and other design work become capsules filled with the essence of their time, are part of important memories, and help us understand the complex currents of here and now. Fragments recognizes and celebrates designs where the essence of the environment and the socio-political era is preserved, craft is perfected, and the artist becomes a beacon of the profession for their life achievements. Participating countries have selected only one item showing the most iconic or breakthrough set, costume, lighting, projection or sound design by one of their most celebrated "Living Legends" of performance design whose work keeps inspiring new generations of artists and audiences.

Curator
Klára Zieglerová

Dorita Hannah, New Zealand

PhoneHome: Island Icarus ("you peeled our skin off")

"65 million people are currently in exile with many confined in unhomely refugee camps and detention canters. For most of us in secure homes, out of sight is out of mind. This work was provoked by Australia's Pacific Solution and its island detention centers where refugees and asylum seekers are indefinitely incarcerated. As Iranian-Kurdish detainee Behrouz Boochani claims, 'our bodies [are] held captive to oppressive conditions ... without any clear path to living a free and safe life'. Boochani created a documentary and wrote a book about this situation using contraband mobile phones. He shows how these devices are the means for situating, documenting and transcending a life lived in exile. ."

– Dorita Hannah

Dorita Hannah's influence and contribution to New Zealand and global performance design practice and theory spans more than two decades of prolific interdisciplinary practice and scholarship. Through teaching, mentoring, and collaboration, she has fostered and nurtured a generation of critical-thinking designers dispersed around the globe. Her ongoing impact on New Zealand and global theatre architecture includes significant contributions to the design of ward-winning venues that enable and facilitate performance: notably the Blyth Performing Arts Centre, Hawkes Bay, NZ; Te Whare Tāpere, Waikato Academy of Performing Arts, NZ; and the Container Globe, which is currently under construction in Detroit, USA. Her co-editorial role on the seminal publication, Performance Design (2008) contributed to a global change in thinking and making around performing arts design and design performativity as well as her recently published book, Event-Space (2018). Hannah's energy and dedication to performance design culture is clearly evident in her prolific and diverse practice. She has authored over 20 book chapters and journal articles, been recognized by her peers with 12 significant awards and collaborative design direction on more than 30 installations, performances and events.

Selected as a performative object – operating between performance design and event-space – PhoneHome: Island Icarus is one in a series of works in which Dorita Hannah collaborated with other scenographers (from New Zealand, Australia, and Canada) whose practice and research intersect in a shared focus on architectural performativity, social histories, and spatial justice. It is a part of the exhibition, PhoneHome, designed for Chile's 2018 Architecture Biennial on "Unpostponable Dialogues", which critiques architecture's complicity in detaining "alien" bodies while recognising the mobile phone's role in resisting such detention. The miniature refugee cabin is one of nine units that housed smartphones streaming selected videos: here depicting a fiery figure wrapped in a wind-whipped emergency blanket who stands on the edge of the sea looking into the rising sun. The work is dedicated to Iranian asylum seeker, Omid Masoumali, who fatally set fire to himself in protest against ongoing detention by the Australian Government on the island of Nauru. Captured on mobile phones, his tragic self-immolation shows him screaming, "you peeled our skin off"; a Farsi phrase referring to intense psychological torture. Like the mythic character of Icarus, whose wings melted when he flew too close to the sun while trying to escape the island of Crete, Masoumali's fatal flight highlights the staggering cost that thousands of refugees continue to pay for wishing to live their lives in safety and security.

"Through her creative work Dorita Hannah brings together designers, architects, artists, performers, theorists and audiences. We acknowledge her as collaborator, facilitator and author of wondrous, poetic, thought-provoking moments, texts and spaces in the world."

- Stuart Foster, Curator for New Zealand

Biography

Dr. Dorita Hannah (Rotorua, 1961) is an artist, scenographer, and event dramaturg who specializes in performance architecture and design. Her trans-disciplinary research in the spatial, visual, performing, and culinary arts involves theatre planning as well as curating live performances and exhibitions. Consulting with communities on cultural environments, Hannah also collaborates with artists, designers and organizations to co-conceive, design and direct events, installations, exhibits, objects and environments. Her last project in Prague was Flood, a dance-architecture event co-created with choreographer Carol Brown and sound artists Russell Scoones. Hannah's formulation of Performance Design contributed to a global change in thinking and making around performing arts design and design performativity; including art and architecture within its ambit.

Dr. Hannah has participated in the Prague Quadrennial as designer of the Heart of PQ (2003), architectural commissioner (2011), selected exhibitor (1995-2019), jury member (2007 and 2019), and theory curator (2015). She co-edited Performance Design (2008), authored Event-Space (2018) and currently co-chairs the Performance+Design Working Group for PSi and the Theatre Architecture Working Group for IFTR. Her creative work has gained awards in architecture, art and design; including a UNESCO Laureate (1999) and Gold/Silver medals at World Stage Design (2009) as well as DINZ and NZIA Awards. She co-curated Fluid States, a year-long globally dispersed festival of events for PSi (2015) as well as PhoneHome for Chile's 2017 Architecture & Urbanism Biennial.

PhoneHome in Unpostponable Dialogues Chile's Architecture & Urbanism Biennial on 'Unpostponable Dialogues', 2017 Designer and Curator Dorita Hannah with Joanne Kinniburgh and Shauna Janssen Selected video created in collaboration with Sean Coyle and Christopher Jackson

ISLAND ICARUS / PHONEHOME: FRAGMENTS exhibition (PQ'19)

ISLAND ICARUS / PHONEHOME: FRAGMENTS exhibition (PQ'19)

ISLAND ICARUS / PHONEHOME: FRAGMENTS exhibition (PQ'19)

Twenty-seven world-renowned scenographers in one publication

One year after the successful exhibition Fragments, which was part of the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, a book with the same title has been recently published. On one hundred and fifty pages, the English-Czech book presents a sample of work from scenographers who have significantly influenced the development of the performance design. Their work is represented by photographs of selected artefacts accompanied by a detailed biography. At the same time, the publication reveals interesting facts about their individual creative approaches by including the most inspiring parts of their interviews that were taken during PQ 2019.
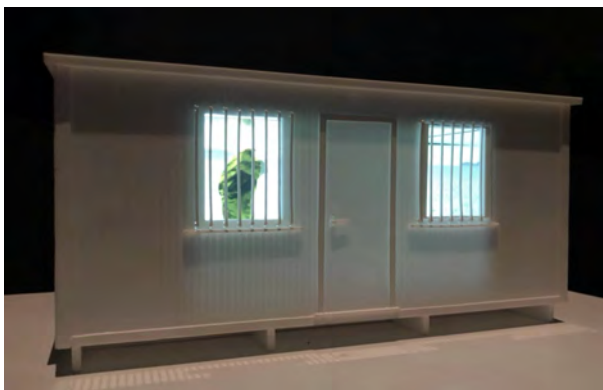
Dorita Hannah – excerpt Fragments

"In this fragmented world, it's important to 'find your bliss and follow your bliss', especially in order that others can do the same. Such pleasure is best when shared.

Over the years I've challenged the perceived centrality of the human performer (in the staged experience), the autocratic director (in the production process) and the hallowed playwright (in theatre's canon). The performer is just another element within a performance ecosystem made up of human and non-human players. In decentring the human, we can question centrality itself and understand it as shifting, multiple and therefore contested. The focus can be flipped onto the audience or into a virtual elsewhere. Watching only people perform is an outdated and uninspiring notion. Czech theatre theorist, Jiří Veltruský, claimed that an object on stage can be much more alive than an actor. We now talk about bio-objects, recognizing that all things have their own living force; their own performative potential.

I'm more interested in how we human beings can de-centre ourselves in a world we have placed under threat, and thereby come to understand the 'other': be it a person, a stranger, nature or any non-human entity. Live performance allows us to create a very distilled and intensive space-time experience in which we can creatively and discursively explore aspects of posthuman agency. As a designer, I'm not interested in being a servant to directors' too-often limited imaginations; functioning as a cipher to find and realize their singular vision. Interdisciplinary collaboration is key. A truly collective process enables each artist to produce something they'd never thought possible to create alone; thanks to the trust in everyone bringing something enriching to the project. It involves fostering, developing and maintaining a creative and communal 'bliss'. This requires operating 'a/part' – being simultaneously a part of the work and apart from it – becoming both creatively immersed and critically distanced. I see this as an oscillation between the intensive experience of Antonin Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty' and the socio-political engagement of Bertolt Brecht's 'Theatre of Alienation'; an intertwining of imagination and reality. My projects invite the spectator to engage bodily with the work (part of), but not necessarily easily (apart from)."

ISLAND ICARUS / PHONEHOME: FRAGMENTS exhibition (PQ'19)